

Institution: Newcastle University
Unit of Assessment: 31 Classics
Title of case study: Using Research Collections to Inform Public Understanding of the Ancient Greek and Etruscan Past
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Research at Newcastle has been instrumental in developing an internationally recognised research collection of ancient Greek and Etruscan artefacts. Research insights directly influenced how the Shefton Gallery was presented in the Great North Museum: Hancock (GNM), and in particular informed the labelling and interpretation of the objects. By adding meaning and context to the artefacts, the research thus enabled museum staff to: i) deliver public lectures on the research collection thereby resulting in loans to national and international museums; and ii) develop educational resources and events (including worksheets, workshops and object loan boxes) to support innovative teaching in schools and universities. The research has therefore informed the understanding of the Ancient Greek and Etruscan past of the hundreds of thousands of visitors who visit the GNM annually as well as thousands of school-age children and students.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Research in Classics at Newcastle on the ancient Greek and Etruscan world has been significant in developing a research collection of Greek and Etruscan artefacts through which much of the impact in this case study is achieved. The underpinning research in the period 1993-2009 has drawn upon the objects in the collection and has been instrumental in developing it through supporting the collection's cataloguing and interpretation in museum displays, raising its profile and justifying its inclusion in the GNM. The research, carried out by Brian Shefton (Emeritus Professor, 1984-2012), produced key insights about ancient Greek and Etruscan artefacts and the collection is now acknowledged as the most important collection of archaeological material from the Greek world in the north of England and one of the best collections of Etruscan material in the UK, outside the British Museum. Strengths of the collection include an extensive range of pottery, a group of bronzes (including a fine collection of Greek and Etruscan mirrors) and a range of sculpture (e.g. Nike, colossal porphyry foot).</p> <p>The underpinning research draws on key pieces from the collection, using an extremely detailed analysis to be able to situate the pieces in their wider context. New research insights and findings disseminated via many internationally renowned publications have raised the profile and significance of the artefacts as well as the collection as a whole (1-6). The acquisition of the upper part of a bronze oinochoe (wine jug) in the early 2000s was particularly significant and inspired new research and a re-examination of 'Rhodian' oinochoai. Shefton published the definitive work on these in 1979, which was revisited and updated in his 2009 article. Here the evidence for the origins of this type of vessel are reassessed and research findings show that they are in fact Etruscan rather than Greek, as had previously been thought. This research provides a key point of reference in an important category of bronze vessel (1). Research on the situla (bucket) from the collection involved investigating the origin of the piece. Much unpublished material is drawn together to argue for an Aegean centre of manufacture, which is counter to the generally accepted belief that the situlae are South Italian (2). A relief decorated situla in the collection was used to review early representations of the female centaur in a wide ranging discussion of the Malacena fabric of early Hellenistic Volterra, and research insights noted the reproduction of metal prototypes and the influence of Greek reliefs, which is significant as it sheds light on the relationship between Greeks and Etruscans (3). The study of black-glaze castulo cups from the collection produced significant research insights concerning the unusual method of construction, noting that they are thick walled, heavy vessels in order to withstand long journeys (4). The research also produced insights into the chronology of these pieces.</p> <p>The research is truly international, transcending borders in order to map the trade routes by which</p>

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objects were transported in Antiquity. The research approach to the material culture of the Greek and Etruscan world was distinguished by Shefton's ability to make connections between related cultures and was informed by his extensive knowledge of museum collections throughout Europe and further afield.

3. References to the research

- (1) Shefton, B.B. (2009) 'Oinochoai and Other Etruscan, Italic and Greek Vessels in Bronze from Trestina', in F.L. Schiavo and A. Romualdi (ed) *I Complessi Archeologici di Trestina e di Fabbrecce Nel Museo Archeologico di Firenze*. Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Monumenti Antichi, Serie Miscellanea – Volume 12. Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider.
- (2) Shefton, B.B. (1994) 'The Waldalgesheim Situli: Where Was it Made?', in C. Dobiat (ed) *Festschrift Fur Otto-Herman Frey zum 65 Geburtstag*, Marburg: Hitzeroth.
- (3) Shefton, B.B. (1998) 'Metal and Clay: Prototype and Re-Creation Zoffany's "Tribuna" and Lessons from the Malacena Fabric of Hellenistic Volterra', in *Revue des Etudes Anciennes*, 100(3/4): 619-662.
- (4) Shefton, B.B. (1996) 'Castulo Cups in the Aegan, the Black Sea Area and the Near East with the Respective Hinterland', in O. Lordkipanidze and P. Lévêque (eds) *Sur les Traces des Argonautes: Actes du 6e Symposium de Vani, Colchide 22-29 Septembre 1990*. Annales Littéraires de l'Université de Besançon.
- (5) Shefton, B.B. (1993) 'The White Lotus, Rogozen and Colchis: The Fate of a Motif', in J. Chapman and P. Dolukhanov (eds) *Cultural Transformations and Interactions in Eastern Europe*. Aldershot: Avebury.
- (6) Shefton, B.B. (2003) 'Contacts Between Picenum and the Greek World to the End of the Fifth Century B.C.: Imports, Influences and Perceptions', in F.L. Schiavo and G. Bretschneider (eds) *I Piceni e l'Italia Medio-Adriatica: Atti del XXII Convegno di Studi Etruschi ed Italici, Ascoli Piceno, Teramo, Ancona, 9-13 Aprile 2000*. Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali.

These publications broadly rate as 2* or above on the basis of the authoritativeness and originality of the content. All publications can be supplied by the HEI on request.

4. Details of the impact

The research has had impact through enhancing public understanding of the ancient Greek and Etruscan past, and informing education outside the HEI and academy. Beneficiaries include hundreds of thousands of museum visitors as well as thousands of school-age children.

Enhancing Public Understanding of the Ancient Greek and Etruscan Past

The GNM opened in May 2009, supported by an investment of £26m from funders including the Heritage Lottery Fund. The decision by the funders to include the Shefton collection in the new museum underlined its importance as a research asset and educational resource, and along with the Roman display and Hatton Gallery, thereby gave the GNM university research status and access to HEFCE funding totalling £920,148 since 2009 (**IMP1**). The research fundamentally shaped the ancient Greek display in the GNM as research insights were used in the labelling and interpretation of the objects, creating meaning and context for visitors. The GNM Manager confirmed how the research influenced the museum's Keeper of Archaeology who curated the display: "*the development of the Shefton Gallery in the Great North Museum was indebted to the research and collection's knowledge of Professor Brian Shefton [...] one example of the way in which Brian's research informed the display is the location of the Rhodian bronze oinochoe in the Etruscan case. These vessels are frequently considered to be of Greek manufacture but, after much study of this particular category of bronze vessel, Brian became convinced that they were Etruscan in origin. His research therefore influenced our decision about where to display this object. There are numerous other examples of where Brian's work influenced the choices made in the Shefton Gallery. In fact we made several alterations to the Gallery after the GNM opened as a result of conversations with Brian*" (**IMP2**). When the collection moved from the Shefton Museum in the university's Armstrong Building to the GNM, it increased the visibility of the collection. Visitor

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figures to the GNM have been exceptional with more than 2.1 million visitors since opening (**IMP3**). This represents a major increase in visitors compared to the previous display. The GNM is a major part of the creative economy of the North East and beyond. In geographical terms, 31% of visitors to Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums (TWAM) museums and galleries in 2011 came from outside Tyne and Wear, and 40% were from socio-economic groups C2, D and E (**IMP3**).

Drawing on the underpinning research insights has enabled museum staff to deliver a number of public lectures, which has resulted in loans to larger national and international museums. For example, statuette of Nike for a temporary exhibition on the Olympics at the British Museum, July-September 2008; a pelike of the Pan Painter to the Onassis Cultural Center, New York for an exhibition on 'Worshipping Women: Ritual and Reality in Classical Athens, December 2008-May 2009 and the National Archaeology Museum, Athens, July-November 2009, thereby increasing the reach of the impact (**IMP4**). As part of Shefton memorial events in April 2013, leading Classical Archaeologists presented on key pieces of the Shefton collection. The conference and public lectures programme was free and open to the public, attracting around 500 people in total (**IMP5**).

Informing Education outside the HEI and Academy

Since it opened, more than 95,000 children have visited GNM with their schools – these include both taught workshops by TWAM staff as well as teacher-led visits (**IMP3**). Bookings for visits are buoyant as a result of the sustained and on-going commitment of the University and museum staff to provide resources for teachers. Whilst the Shefton collection was first created to support teaching and research within the HEI, it has since been developed as an educational teaching resource for school children, firstly by university staff through education outreach at the Shefton Museum, and more recently at the GNM. TWAM staff have been able to develop innovative educational experiences which connect, for example, ancient Greek myth and religion to the natural world as well as develop visual and story-telling skills in school-age children (**IMP6**). Workshops on topics covered in the National Curriculum (such as the Olympics, ancient myth, Greek warfare, and Greek art) are popular and growing, and the Greek collection is particularly popular in supporting teaching of Greek history in Key Stage 2. The learning outcomes achieved by these workshops are to increase students' knowledge about hoplites, compare the ancient and modern Olympics, and allow students to examine and in some cases handle artefacts; they draw directly on the research and collection (**IMP6**). Between April 2011 and July 2013 alone, more than 3000 school-age children have attended Greek workshops led by TWAM staff (**IMP7**). Feedback from teachers is positive: they comment that it supports their work in class well, helping to stimulate discussion and motivate their students whilst allowing them an opportunity to view and handle artefacts (**IMP7**). The Shefton collection is also popular for teacher-led visits, where teachers are encouraged to download worksheets so they can experience the ancient Greek material side-by-side with other collections (**IMP6**).

As part of the Shefton memorial events, the Shefton collection has also been used to inspire and support artistic expression in school-age children in a new project between the University, GNM and West Jesmond Primary School (**IMP5**). Sally Waite (Newcastle University Teaching Fellow) and Andrew Parkin (GNM Keeper of Archaeology) led the project which ran from January to April 2013. Following an assembly and archaeological workshops in which each class looked at objects from the collection the children produced artworks with the help of Newcastle University student volunteers. Two art pieces per class were selected for an exhibition held in the GNM during the Shefton memorial week in April 2013 (with future redisplay already planned). All year 3 students (who are studying the Greeks) also spent a day at the GNM doing various activities (pottery, temple building, drama, mythic comic books and hoplite workshops). In total, 572 children aged 4-11 and 24 teachers took part in the project. Feedback from both teachers and children is largely very positive. For example, the children found the project interesting and fun and one said "*it was good because you have fun while you were learning*". They also enjoyed being able to see, handle and feel the artefacts, using "*real things*" to design and make their own art, often using new techniques such as drawing on pottery rather than paper. Using objects from the collection brought an element to the children's learning not normally experienced in the classroom. Feedback from the teachers echoed these points, particularly the level of engagement, enjoyment and enthusiasm

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showed by the children who “*were able to do a real practical activity which had more meaning for them*”. The teachers felt that the project, which one teacher called “*hands on history*” supported curriculum teaching as well as giving younger children an introduction to a topic they would study in future. One said that the project “*showed that even in Early Years teaching we can introduce elements of history*”. Teachers also benefited as some felt that the project gave them greater knowledge and new ideas to try in the classroom, and highlighted the importance of using new stimuli in teaching, as well as the potential for cross-curriculum teaching, i.e. making more use of art when studying Greeks or the Romans (IMP8).

Another of the educational resources developed by TWAM is the Greek loans boxes. These ‘boxes of delight’ are partly based on objects from the Shefton collection and are very popular with schools (at all stages), home educators and other groups. Between 2008 and July 2013, more than 250 adults and 3800 children across 9 local education authorities (LEAs) in the north east of England accessed the loans boxes. They are often requested to aid teaching of topics in the National Curriculum, or to develop skills, such as literacy, drawing, discovery and investigation. Feedback is positive, with claims that the loan boxes were inspirational, useful for generating discussion and helpful in imagining the past and bringing lessons to life. For example, one school commented that the Greek loans boxes were “*a great resource enjoyed by the children and a huge asset to their learning and understanding*” (IMP9).

In addition to school groups, other universities within and outside the region use the collection for research and teaching purposes. Academic staff at other HEIs, for example Edinburgh and Durham Universities, have noted the value and prestige of the research collection, and expressed the positive benefits to students in their learning experiences. For example, a Professor of Greek Art and Archaeology from Edinburgh University brought Masters students to visit the Shefton collection, which she described as “*ideal for teaching*”. According to the Professor, the visiting students said that the visit “*had been the highlight of the semester, that they loved it, that it was eye-opening to them, and set them on fire to learn more*”, and she went on to say that “*these students gained tremendously from the experience*” and that she could “*hardly think of a better instance of impact*” (IMP10).

Online tools have also been developed by Newcastle scholars to inform education outside the HEI and the academy. Identifact, <http://cias.ncl.ac.uk/Identifact/>, which was originally designed as a revision tool for Newcastle University students, is now available globally as an internet learning tool for the study of Greek pottery.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- (IMP1) HEFCE funding details.
- (IMP2) Factual statement from Manager: Great North Museum: Hancock, TWAM.
- (IMP3) TWAM, Impact Reports 2011/12 and 2012/2013. Available at: http://www.twmuseums.org.uk/geisha/assets/files/TWAM_Appendices_Visitor%20Information.pdf, and <http://www.twmuseums.org.uk/geisha/assets/files/TWAM%20Annual%20REPORT%20v10.pdf>.
- (IMP4) GNM Exhibition Loans and Public Lectures, supplied by TWAM. Available on request.
- (IMP5) GNM Shefton Memorial Events: Exhibition, Conference and Public Lectures. Available on request.
- (IMP6) GNM Schools Worksheets and Learning Outcomes. Available at: http://www.twmuseums.org.uk/schools/downloads.html?s_venue=3.
- (IMP7) GNM Schools Visit Data and Feedback for Greek workshops, supplied by TWAM. Available on request.
- (IMP8) Feedback from Jesmond School project. Available on request.
- (IMP9) Loans Box Data and Feedback, supplied by TWAM. Available on request.
- (IMP10) Factual statement from Professor of Greek Art and Archaeology, Classics, University of Edinburgh.